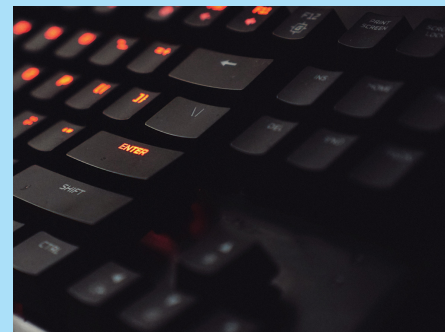
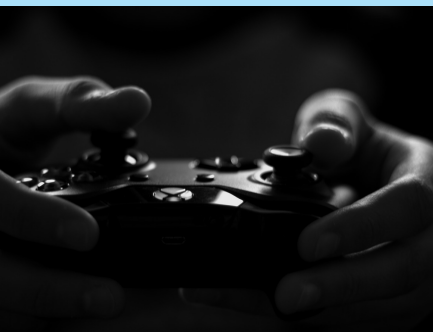




COMPUTER SCIENCE

in

ARKANSAS



GAME ON!

NEW VIDEO GAME COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Governor Asa Hutchinson and the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Computer Science recently announced the inaugural Great Arkansas History Video Game Coding Competition, to begin on January 15, 2020. 4th through 8th graders all across the state will have approximately 3 months to build a video game highlighting an aspect of Arkansas History.

On January 15th, the official theme will be released, and students will have until April 15th to dream, construct, and submit a game of any type, while focusing on storytelling, coding and state history. Each member of the first place team will receive \$1000. In addition, all placing entries will win prizes for their team and their school. These winners and other honorable mentions will see their games hosted on the CS Initiative website. Students who are interested simply need to speak to a school faculty member to sign up as a sponsor. They can be in groups of up to 6 students, and schools may have multiple teams (based on enrollment numbers), and this is open to all 4th through 8th grade public, private and homeschool students.

Teachers, parents and administrators with questions can reach out to CSforAR@arkansas.gov for assistance. For more information, please see the following link: <http://bit.ly/ARCSHistComp>

COMMUNITY CODING NIGHT

The CSforAR Team in partnership with the UALR STEM Education Center, UALR Computer Science, and UALR Information Science departments hosted a Community Night of Coding on Monday, December 9th, in the EIT building on the UA Little Rock Campus.

There were workshops and demos from UALR Computer Science and Information Science faculty and students, Hour of Code activities, plus a ton of computer science hands-on demos, including virtual reality and cybersecurity.



CS SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHT

John Hart has been waiting for this month since he was in first grade, even though he didn't know of it until this past summer. John, one of the newest CS specialists, is simply in love with video games.

"I've joked that my relationship with video games has been the longest one in my life," Hart said recently. "I received a Nintendo almost 34 years ago to the day, and since then, I've never really stopped being a gamer."

Originally an Algebra teacher, Hart has worked as an IT tech at a major hospital and studied computer science in his undergraduate studies. He also served as a Peace Corps IT volunteer in Armenia for 3.5 years. "Peace Corps taught me a lot about how to build capacity in individuals and institutions, and how partnerships were important for any project to be successful, and that real change comes from incremental and sustainable progress."

After joining the CS for AR team, Hart began on a proposal that would ultimately become the Great Arkansas History Video Game Competition, which begins in January. The competition which blends video game design and Arkansas history was born from his desire to see ELA, games and coding all come together.



"As a math teacher, I thought it was very important that my students bring communication into their coursework. As a specialist, I want to make sure that ELA and humanities are also represented in the CS work that we do. Knowing that Arkansas history is a mandated subject, and that Arkansas possesses such rich history to explore, I thought this was a rather exciting opportunity, and I'm grateful that the Governor and CS for AR team took the idea, and granted me the opportunity to run with it."

If you would like information on blending game design with your classroom (or just to get some excellent game suggestions), email him at john.hart@starfishnw.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Intro. to Networking @
Arkansas River
Jan. 17, 2020*

*Hackathon @ SWAEC
Jan. 30, 2020*

*Adv. Info. Security @
DeQueen Jan. 21, 2020*

*Intro. to Networking @
Wilbur D. Mills
Feb. 3, 2020*

*Adv. Info. Security @
Wilbur Feb. 6, 2020*



CS Professional
Development

ASTATE, APSRC, AND ADE PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE STATEWIDE ONLINE CODING CURRICULUM

The Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas State University, and the Arkansas Public School Resource Center announced a partnership program to provide a statewide online coding curriculum starting with the fall 2020 semester.

The first offering of its type to the high school students of Arkansas, the UpSkill program is designed to support the Governor's initiative on computer science skills. The course structure leads students through a nine-month curriculum that prepares them to receive a certificate in Swift coding.



"The Arkansas Computer Science Initiative has been and will continue to lead the nation in K-12 computer science education; however, to meet the needs of our state, students, and industries, our initiative must strengthen its partnerships and connections to post-secondary education and the workforce," says Anthony Owen, State Director of Computer Science. "Through partnerships, like the one we are announcing today, Arkansas will increase relevant opportunities for students who are progressing into the workforce directly from high school or into traditional college programs. "The A-State / ADE Upskill partnership is a great step in the right direction as we build tomorrow's workforce with today's student population." A limited number of slots are available in this initial rollout for fall 2020.

For more information: <http://www.astate.edu/news/new-partnership-to-provide-statewide-online-coding-curriculum>

INNOVATION GRANT WINNERS

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Office of Computer Science is once again making an effort to help districts grow computer science within their districts awarded a quarter of a million dollars to 17 school districts out of the 38 that applied for the Innovation in Computer Science grant.

The recipients will use the grant funds to cover the expenses associated with purchasing curriculum, software licenses, and non-fundamental, as well as provide professional development or student incentives, as outlined in their submitted budgets.

Grant Recipients are as follows:

Greenland High School (Greenland School District): \$25,000.00
Northcentral Arkansas Education Service Cooperative: \$25,000.00
Des Arc High School (Des Arc School District): \$24,293.70
Riverview High School (Riverview School District): \$21,798.32
Hackler Intermediate School (Mountain Home School District): \$20,000.00
Lincoln High School (Lincoln School District): \$19,850.00
Greenbrier High School (Greenbrier School District): \$19,810.00
Valley View School District: \$17,417.00
Fouke Elementary School (Fouke School District): \$13,279.03
Maynard High School (Maynard School District): \$13,137.59
Ballman Elementary School (Fort Smith School District): \$11,874.88
Lonoke High School (Lonoke School District): \$10,400.00
Bryant High School (Bryant School District): \$8,780.00
Acorn High School (Ouachita River School District): \$8,296.57
Forest Heights STEM Academy (Little Rock School District): \$7,500.00
Rogers High School (Rogers School District): \$7,480.00
Pangburn High School (Pangburn School District): \$1,414.75



CS STUDENT RECOGNITION

In an effort to encourage student participation and growth in computer science the state plans to recognize students efforts by selecting 50 students who show outstanding commitment to CS. The application process will open in February and be comprised of public and private schools, as well as homeschool students, currently in grades 11 or 12. The winners will be announced in April or May of 2020. For more information click <https://bit.ly/2NtwSkv>.

CSTA CONFERENCE

The Office of Computer Science invites educators wishing to attend the CSTA Conference in Virginia this July 11-15 to apply for a \$2,000.00 sponsorship. Successful applicants will receive funds and will participate in specific conference activities with the Arkansas delegation. Sponsorships are open to teachers, librarians, curriculum coordinators, counselors, and other educators who are passionate technology integrators and/or computer science educators. [Please click here to access the application form.](#)

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SOCIAL MEDIA

#ARKidsCanCode
#CSforAR

